

JSU CLUB ACTIVITY



JEALOUSY IS SWEET?

Time needed	20 minutes
Age range	Any teen
Background of teen	Any background can participate in this club, no previous knowledge needed
Set up	Whole group – regular room set up

Goals:

JSUers will consider if they are happy with what they have when they don't compare what they have with others. Is comparing what we have to others the problem? Can jealousy ever be positive?

Relevance:

We live in a society which constantly tells us we need more than what we have. This session asks teens to consider what they have without looking around at what others have. It will also consider the possibility that there is a fine line between jealousy and admiration and if there is such a thing as positive jealousy.

Active Learning:

- ❖ Ask the kids to sit at their desk and put bags of candy to each kid. Each bag should have different amount. **(One or two should have significantly more than others** -if using paper bags, teens do not have to have eyes closed...the idea being that they don't immediately see what other got)
- ❖ Tell each teen to look JUST in their own bag. Ask- Are you happy with what you have? Most will say yes. Ask- why are they happy?
- ❖ Tell teens to empty each of their bags on their desks. Ask again- Are you happy with what you have? Teen will likely start comparing what they have to others and as a result of seeing what someone else has- will be less satisfied than before.
- ❖ Bring out concept of jealousy. Encourage teens to realize what just happened (so long as they focused on just what they have they were happy...once they were comparing to others...they became jealous...)

Supplies needed:

1. Candy
2. Small paper bags
3. Paper and pens

Step by step planning:

Time	Facilitator Activity	Teen activity
5 mins	Give out candy – ask questions	Discussion
10 mins	Compare candy- ask facilitation questions	Discussion
10 mins	Wrap up message and Torah	Discussion

Facilitation Questions:

1. Is it possible to control jealousy?
2. Can jealousy ever be positive or good?
3. What situations can you think of that jealousy might be good?

Wrap up message and Torah thought:

Bereishis Chapter 30	בראשית פרשת ויצא פרק ל
1) And Rachel saw that she did not bear children for Yaakov and Rachel was jealous of her sister and she said to Yaakov “give me children and if not I will die”	(א) וַתֵּרָא רָחֵל כִּי לֹא יֵלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב וַתִּקְנֶא רָחֵל בְּאֶחָתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־יַעֲקֹב הִבְהִילֵי בָנִים וְאִסְיֵאִן מִתָּה אֲנֹכִי:

Rashi's Commentary	רש"י בראשית פרשת ויצא פרק ל
And Rachel was jealous of her sister- She was jealous of her good deeds, she said “if she were not more righteous than me she would not be worthy of bearing children”	(א) וַתִּקְנֶא רָחֵל בְּאֶחָתָהּ קִנְאָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂיהָ הַטּוֹבִים, אָמְרָה אֵלּוּלֵי שְׂצֻדָּה מִמֶּנִּי לֹא זָכְתָה לְבָנִים

Maharal's Gur Aryeh	גור אריה בראשית פרשת ויצא פרק ל
She was jealous of her deeds- impossible that this righteous woman was jealous. Since jealousy removes a person from the world (Ethics of the Fathers)	(א) קִנְאָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂיהָ. דַּחֲלִילָה בְּצַדִּיקָה לְהִיּוֹת מִקְנֵאָה, שֶׁהִקְנָאָה מוּצִיא אֶת הָאָדָם מִן הָעוֹלָם (אבות פ"ד מ"ב)

Talmud Bavli – Bava Basra- 22a	תלמוד בבלי מסכת בבא בתרא דף כב עמוד א
Jealousy of Torah knowledge leads to more wisdom	קִנְיַת סוּפְרִים תְּרַבֵּה חִכְמָה

- ❖ Ibn Ezra explains- Imagine a farmer who visits the royal palace. As he is viewing the beautiful grounds, he sees the princess step outside in her royal garments. Though struck by her beauty, does he think for a moment, I want to marry her? Most people wouldn't entertain that thought for a second. They realize that the king's daughter is out of their league. People desire something that they can conceivably have, not something that is totally out of reach. The same should hold true for someone else's possessions. We should train ourselves to realize that since Hashem gave the money, the looks etc. to our friend, it is something that He wants our friend to have, not us. As such, it should not be within the realm of our desires.
- ❖ R' Daniel of Kelm tells a story about an elephant that was jealous of the eagles' wings. He always complained that he wished he had wings. One day he got his wish. He grew a pair of wings. Not only was he still unable to fly, but the wings brought him down even more. They were cumbersome, he was slower etc. We may think we want something but we need to recognize that we have what we need and what we want (are jealous of) will likely not help us but rather have a negative impact.
- ❖ Whilst it is true that jealousy is an emotion and difficult to control, if we train ourselves in our mindsets, it may be easier. There are times when jealousy can be channeled into something productive almost like admiration. There are very specific and few examples of what positive jealousy can be.